

REMARKS

Claims 10-32 are all of the pending claims, with claims 10, 15, and 22 being written in independent form.

The Examiner rejects claims 10, 12-24, and 26-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. 5,692,292 to Asai et al. ("Asai '292"); and claims 11 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Asai '292 in view of U.S. 5,588,195 to Asai et al. ("Asai '195). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections in view of the following remarks.

A. Independent Claim 10:

Independent claim 10 defines an automatic component mounting unit that includes (among other things) a plurality of exchangeable mounting members with respective data storage devices, ***wherein each of said data storage devices stores an amount of mounting member data related to a fixed reference mark, characteristic for each of said respective mounting members.*** An exemplary embodiment of these features is discussed throughout the specification. For example, and with reference to Figs. 1 and 2, each of the substrate camera 17, the head member 5, and the feeding member 3 (the "mounting members") includes a corresponding data storage device 18, 15, 16, respectively. The data storage devices store data that is characteristic of the corresponding mounting member.¹ The stored data relates to a fixed reference mark. As an example, a storage device may store geometrical or positioning data that has been obtained by measurements relative to a fixed reference.² This data may be utilized by a control device to facilitate calibration of the mounting members. Indeed, such calibration may occur immediately upon a mounting member being installed in the automatic component

¹ Spec., p. 7, first and second full paragraphs.

² Spec., p. 3, third full paragraph.

mounting unit.³ At least these features (as claimed in claim 10), in combination with the other features defined by claim 10, are not taught or suggested by the prior art relied upon by the Examiner.

The Examiner relies upon Asai '292 to teach each and every feature of the invention defined by claim 10. In so doing, and with reference to Fig. 1, the Examiner compares Asai's working modules 12, 14, 16, 18 to the claimed mounting members. This rejection position is believed to be incorrect for the following reasons.

Applicants agree with the Examiner that each of Asai's working modules 12, 14, 16, 18 has a respective controller with a read-only memory (ROM) and a random-access memory (RAM). However, the ROMs and the RAMs are not comparable to the storage devices defined by claim 10. This is because the ROMs and the RAMs do **not** store any data characteristic of the respective working modules, much less data that are related to a fixed reference mark.

Asai's disclosure is straightforward and explicit regarding the type of data that may received by and/or stored by the controllers of the working modules. The pertinent portions of the disclosure indicate that the working devices of the working modules are controlled by the controllers on the basis of a **working schedule information**. This information may include data indicative of the kinds of electronic components, the number of electronic components, the mounting positions on the circuit board, whether the components are provisionally fixed, and the number of circuit boards to be processed.⁴ Asai also indicates that the controller of each working module may provide **status information**. This information may indicate whether an operation is complete, whether the supply of components has been exhausted,

³ *Id.*

⁴ Asai '292 (2:58-67).

and whether the supply of a fixing material has been exhausted.⁵ These rather extensive laundry lists of data (associated with the working schedule information and the status information) simply do **not** include any mention of data for the working module that is related to a fixed reference mark.

Further, at least with respect to claims 16-21 and 29-32, the Examiner cites portions of Asai '292 as allegedly teaching the storage of data that relate to a fixed reference mark. Applicants respectfully disagree at least because the cited portions refer to the data stored by the **common** processor, not the respective controllers of the working modules.⁶

Turning to the next point, Applicants respectfully point out that Asai's working modules are **not** exchangeable mounting members since the working modules are involved in the mounting process one after another (see e.g. abstract lines 7-0). By contrast, according to the present invention the exchangeable members of a specific type are alternatively installed in the automatic component mounting unit such that only one of the plurality of similar exchangeable mounting members is involved in the mounting process.

In summary, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 10 recites features that are practically and conceptually different than Asai '292. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the raised anticipation rejection.

B. Independent Claims 15 and 22:

Independent claims 15 and 22 recite features that are similar to the ones noted above with respect to claim 10. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 15 and 22 are patentable for reasons analogous to those noted above with respect to claim 10.

⁵ Asai '292 (3:1-10).

⁶ Asai '292 (5:54-63) and (23:24-45).

CONCLUSION

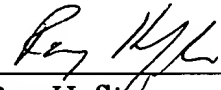
For at least the reasons noted above, Applicant respectfully submit that claims 10, 15, and 22 are patentable, and that claims 11-14, 16-21, and 23-32 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies.

In the event that any matters remain at issue in the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 668-8000 in the Northern Virginia area, for the purpose of a telephonic interview.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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